



My name is Luis Benavide, I am 64 years old, and 35 years ago I was diagnosed with type 2 diabetes. I am a member of the Fight Back Committee of Make the Road Connecticut.

I am in favor of S.B. 284: AN ACT INCREASING THE AGE FROM EIGHT TO EIGHTEEN YEARS FOR AN INCOME-ELIGIBLE PERSON TO OBTAIN MEDICAL ASSISTANCE REGARDLESS OF IMMIGRATION STATUS.

I have been in the United States for 21 years. Since I arrived, being an immigrant and not qualifying for health insurance, I have not received the care and follow-up that this chronic condition requires.

This means that twenty-one long years have already passed, since I have no longer been able to give myself the necessary follow-up having type 2 diabetes.

Having so many years with this diagnosis and without treatment, brings serious complications and unfortunately I have experienced several of them.

Four years ago one of my feet began to suffer from gangrene without me realizing it quickly, because the condition of diabetes causes you to lose sensitivity in your legs. On that occasion I was taken by ambulance to one of the main hospitals in Hartford, Connecticut. Unfortunately, all the toes on my left foot had to be amputated.

Although I am grateful that they operated on me and provided the service I needed, I cannot be completely satisfied as even though I have lost my toes due to my chronic condition, I qualify for health insurance. He didn't even qualify to cover the high costs of diabetes drugs.

Now, imagine not being able to work, not being able to qualify for any social assistance and with my diabetes condition out of control. Shortly after, my right leg also began to suffer from gangrene and as a consequence, they also had to amputate part of my right foot.

My health problems due to the poor treatment received in Connecticut with this chronic condition that I suffer from, have also begun to deteriorate my eyesight. In the past few months I have been diagnosed with cataracts in both eyes.

Since I arrived in this country I could not follow up on my diabetes condition and this has already affected my two feet and my sight. But just like me, there are many thousands of others in our community experiencing serious health problems, for the simple fact of not receiving the services we needed on time and not having preventive care.

I share my story to show you how important it is that our children have access to health insurance so they don't face the same situation. It's still very important that the conversation continues and that all of us, including adults, have access to health insurance. In order to ensure healthy children, their parents, aunts, uncles and grandparents need to be healthy as well.

I support S.B. 284 and hope that the committee will also support it and vote for it.

Thank you for your time,

Luis Benavide